

A+SEL Lesson Plan 1 • For Ages 5–8

The New Bird in Town

By Jamie L. B. Deenihan and Carrie Hartman

Book Summary

When Owl moves to a new neighborhood, he can't wait to make friends. But when he invites the other forest animals to his tree-warming party, they misinterpret his intentions. With the help of Skunk, who knows how much first impressions can stink, Owl and his neighbors learn that everyone deserves a chance to be known.

Everyone wants to belong and be known. Giving students regular opportunities to get to know each other leads to the creation of a positive classroom community. Activities that allow students to share about themselves will foster the practice of essential listening skills and help to build empathy. Here is a structured activity that enables students to share about themselves with classmates.

My Partner's Pride

Use this activity right before reading the story to reflect on how it feels to learn something new about another person and to have the responsibility for sharing that new knowledge with others.

Goal: To practice listening to others by summarizing what a partner shares

SEL Skills Focus: Social awareness (respect for others, empathy, perspective-taking)

Opening:

1. Help students form pairs.
2. Tell students that they will take turns sharing about one thing they are proud of.
3. Then they will summarize what their partner told them and share that with the class.
4. Discuss with students how to share what you are proud about in respectful and caring ways. For example, ask students, "How can we share what we are proud of in ways that are respectful to everyone? What if your partner feels like they are not proud about anything?"

Body:

1. Give children a few minutes to partner chat about their "prides" and to prepare a brief summary for the class.
2. Signal that it's time to stop sharing.
3. Model with a volunteer how to summarize a partner share. For example, "This is Giovanni. He is proud of being a good sport when he plays soccer."
4. Go around the circle or the room so each student can share out what their partner said.

Closing:

1. Ask students to share any strategies they used to listen carefully to their partner's share.
2. Ask students to reflect and share about how it feels to get to know someone better. Ask, "Does getting to know someone better make it easier to call that person your friend?"
3. Ask students to listen to the story for what happens when the characters don't know each other very well, and to pay attention to what happens when that changes.



Specifications:

32 pages

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This book addresses the following social and emotional learning skills:

- Welcomes or invites others to join in
- Independently recognizes when others need help
- Understands the importance of being polite and kind
- Takes risks to learn new things
- Willing to independently resolve conflicts with peers
- Can recognize the value in being open and honest with others